

Monday, August 28, 1967

# WHICH WAY TREASON?



Ricefields, buffaloes, and children: the perennial image of peace in Viet-Nam.  
— A pointed absence of American G.I.'s.

## Aid to the N.L.F.-why?..the history

Towards the end of July the Monash Labor Club decided to establish a Committee to raise funds for the South Vietnam National Liberation Front. Since then the Committee has been subjected to a constant barrage of attacks from the press, parliament, etc., and we have not in fact started collecting for the fund. We are issuing this pamphlet to set out what has happened in the last few weeks, what the N.L.F. is, why we support it.

For a long time, the Monash Labor Club, in common with other University Labor Clubs has opposed the Vietnam war. We felt that the United States was guilty of aggression and that Australia should not join with them in sending troops to intervene in a civil war. Together with many other sections of the community we fought hard against commitment to the Vietnam war and the sending of conscripts. But we failed and the war still goes on and conscripts are still getting killed.

Gradually we came to realize that it was no use simply condemning the war and demanding that it be stopped. We were logically forced to move from denouncing the United States as an aggressor to supporting the victims of aggression—the Vietnamese people led by

the National Liberation Front. For a long time we have been distributing literature which showed that the war was not "aggression from the North" and that the "Viet Cong" were an indigenous Southern Vietnamese nationalist movement whose main aims were social justice, land reform and an end to foreign domination. We had been pointing out to people that the Americans were the aggressors who had sent half a million troops to occupy another country and who were engaged in indiscriminate attacks on the civilian population. After saying this sort of thing for some time we were led to and acknowledge our actual support for the National Liberation Front. Support for the N.L.F. has been the policy of the Monash Labor Club (and of the Australian Student Labor Federation which represents Labor Clubs at all Australian Universities) for considerable time now but no concrete action was taken to implement it. The Sydney University ALP Club did establish a fund for medical aid to North Vietnam and the N.L.F. more than a year ago. This has been largely ignored since.



## Non-issue to issue?

After the last election it seemed that the Vietnam war was rapidly becoming a non-issue. The war was escalating and leading to more casualties; the public was becoming increasingly restless, confused, and dissatisfied with it but it seemed as if the peace movement had given up the fight. The heavy defeat in November and the subsequent election of Mr. Whitlam to leadership of the ALP served to demoralize opponents of the war. We felt that it was vitally important to re-raise the whole issue of our involvement in Vietnam and to raise it in a completely new context. We felt that the problem was not that most Australians actually supported the war but that they just weren't interested and couldn't follow the long complicated arguments about Geneva conferences, de-escalation, etc. People who had previously settled for the Government's simple argument the "the Reds must be stopped there before they get here" were now becoming increasingly anxious about the progress of the war and we wanted to make sure that this anxiety could be turned into active opposition by making people aware of the issues involved.

Accordingly we decided that the best way to make our opposition to the war felt was to declare our full support for the National Liberation Front and prove that we meant it by collecting funds for them. This was put before a series of five general meetings of the Labor Club with attendances of between 50 and 80 and it was finally decided on Friday, July 21, after a total of 7 hours discussion that the Club would sponsor an autonomous Committee for Aid to the NLF which would have two funds—the main one for direct financial aid to the NLF (the "unspecified" fund) and a second one for medical aid to civilians in NLF controlled areas. We realized that this was an unpopular stand to take and we expected a hostile reaction at first but we were surprised at the speed and violence of the counter-attack. By Monday the 24th, the press had got hold of the story (we did not intend to release it until we had actually set up the committee) and we were being attacked by the RSL and the Young Liberals and disowned by the ALP Federal Leader. There were some violent incidents at Monash and the situation was looking rather grim. However we were also surprised by the amount of support we received and by the end of the week we had more than \$400 in the kitty despite instructions from the University Administration that we

were not allowed to collect non-medical funds on campus. For the entire week everyone at Monash was at least discussing Vietnam and although the reaction to our actions was hostile there was a noticeable shift towards supporting our right to take this position and towards opposing the war itself. Thus people who were previously unenthusiastic about the war but did not support an immediate withdrawal were now saying that they completely opposed the war but did not support the NLF. This was now a "moderate" position! On Thursday a meeting of 800 students was convened by members of the University DLP Club for the specific purpose of condemning the Labor Club's actions. We decided to officially boycott the meeting because it was not a properly convened general meeting of students and we were sure we would be beaten we wanted to make it clear that the students present had no more right to speak for the University as a whole than we did.

## Students vote to recognise the N.L.F.

The two spokesmen for the club and the aid committee sent a note to the meeting saying that they would not attend because there had been threats of violence. But the meeting rejected the DLP motion condemning us and instead adopted a series of resolutions supported by the Labor Club which, while dissociating the student body from our stand completely affirmed our right to hold any political views, opposed any attempt by the University authorities to restrict political activities on campus and called on the Students Representative Council to take legal action against anyone initiating violent incidents. We supported the dissociation because we had never claimed to represent the views of students as a whole and saw no reason why this should not be made clear to the public, but we were very pleased to find such an expression of student support for civil liberties especially in view of the hostile and hysterical atmosphere created by the press.

On Friday we officially formed the Committee and started making plans for collecting the money and getting it to Vietnam. By this time the press had slackened off its campaign and it looked as if the whole thing might be able to go ahead peacefully. In view of the misrepresentation of our views in press reports that we would not care if bullets marked Monash University were to hit an Australian conscript the Committee decided to issue a public statement pointing out that any money sent to the NLF would be used for non-military purposes only.

On Monday there was a general meeting of the Labor Club. Our opponents within the club had announced to the press that the original resolution had only been carried by a small section of the club and did not have the support of the general membership and accordingly there were hordes of cameramen and reporters waiting outside the meeting. Signs were put up all over the University asking members to restore responsibility to the club by attending the meeting and voting to rescind support for the NLF. There was a record attendance of 150 (more than the total membership of the anti-labor political clubs at Monash put together and more than the number of students who attended the last general meeting of students called by the SRC). After an hour's debate the meeting rejected a resolution motion by 90 votes to 39 and resolved by 85 votes to 30 to reaffirm full support for the Aid Committee. About 15 to 20 members resigned with the intention of forming a new club but we also received 20 to 30 new applications for membership and with 250 members we are still the largest political organization at any Australian University.

Since the Monash committee was announced, a committee for medical aid has been established at Melbourne University and an unspecified committee has been set up in Canberra. We have also been informed of plans for committees in Newcastle and at La Trobe University and for a broad Victorian Medical Aid Committee.

## Democratic Rights and Francis James

We have already received \$700 and have distributed roneoed leaflets at the Hiroshima Day March and the Melbourne University Union debate on Aid to the NLF (the 700 students at the debate voted 5 to 1 in favour of the proposition "That every Australian has the democratic right to send aid to the National Liberation Front"). In addition more than \$10,000 for medical and civil aid in North Vietnam and the Liberated Areas of South Vietnam has been sent via M. Francis James in Sydney—the Editor of the Anglican.

After some preliminary mumbings about ratbag students the Government decided to support Senator McManus's urgency motion in the Senate asking for Government action under the Crimes Act or other suitable legislation. This was a rather embarrassing position for the Government to take as the Senate motion really amounted to censure of the Attorney-General who could have already initiated legal action. It later turned out to be just a political stunt to allow misleading propaganda about us to

be spread all over Australia through the ABC broadcasting network and under the protection of parliamentary privilege. After a long and pompous debate the Government and DLP Senators joined together in voting that their own motion be allowed to lapse. Soon after this Holt announced that Cabinet would treat the question as a matter of urgency (so much for the unimportant group of irresponsible students!) and it was decided to bring down special legislation. At the same time Henry Bolte announced that the Universities would be asked to submit reports to Cabinet on pro-NLF activities because he was most concerned that public money might be used to support traitors. It is rumoured that Bolte will threaten to cut off University finances unless they expel students involved and introduce loyalty oaths. If the University bows to this kind of pressure they will meet with a sharp reaction from students and staff.

## Money is Sent

That is about the story to date (28/8/67). We have already sent \$100 from the medical fund to a British Committee which forwards aid to the Liberation Red Cross (affiliated to the NLF) directly in the form of medical supplies and we have forwarded more than \$500 from the unspecified fund to the NLF mission in Cambodia. At this stage we are appealing for money for organizational (and legal) expenses rather than aid as we will have to produce a considerable amount of printed material to state our case.

Before setting out our views on the nature of the NLF and our reasons for supporting it we would like to answer two criticisms that are sometimes made.

1. It is suggested that while the NLF may be in the right, it is wrong for us to send aid to an enemy against whom Australian troops are fighting.

We disagreed with this; in fact we would say that it is precisely because Australia is involved in the war that it is necessary for those opposed to our aggression to make their stand quite clearly by aiding the victims of aggression. The aid we are sending will be used for non-military purposes.

It is the Government which is sending conscripts to die in Vietnam and it is the Government which can bring them back. Conscripts and other troops are being killed and will continue to be killed in Vietnam because



# What the University Study Group says about The NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

## Composition

The Front, primarily a South Vietnamese Nationalist movement, with a strong Communist representation, comprises a wide diversity of factions which include the minority peoples of the mountains, the Khmer Cambodian minority, some elements of the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao and Binh Xuyen sects and trade unions.

As a result of political persecution, prominent members of Diem's non-Communist political opposition, intellectuals, professional workers and anti-French Buddhists had left the cities to join the rebels in the jungle areas near the Cambodian border. The leader of the N.L.F., Nguyen Huu Tho, was formerly a non-Communist Saigon lawyer. In 1955 Diem's reprisals against former resistance members impelled Tho to form a group known as the Saigon-Cholon Peace Committee to supervise the correct implementation of the Geneva Accords. He was immediately gaoled. In 1960 he was freed by the Viet Cong, joined the Front and was elected as President.

The General Secretary of the Front is a Communist journalist and former Professor of History, Nguyen Van Hieu. The Central Committee includes representatives of the Buddhists, the Catholics, the tribes people, professional people and other non-Communists.

The N.L.F. is primarily a political organisation which gains territorial control by political rather than military methods. N.L.F. cadres approach a village, explain their aims, identify themselves with the problems of the people and provide basic social services. In most instances they are well received by people living under government control. The Saigon government seeks to impose its authority forcibly, and by these tactics antagonizes the villagers and causes them to support the N.F.L. The "liberation" of a village by the N.L.F. means the residents are free to elect their own leaders; land is redistributed to the peasants; the taxes that they pay to the N.L.F. are less onerous than those they were required to pay to Saigon. The N.L.F. fully understands the importance of a strict moral code in its dealings with the peasants, whereas government officials are often cruel and tyrannical.

## Viet Cong and the Villages

The Viet Cong are often referred to in our newspapers, and by government spokesmen, as "terrorists". The term has no precise meaning, and is always used by entrenched power groups to disparage the opposition. In "Aggression from the North", for example, Appendix I lists acts of "terrorism", but does not say what they are, though they presumably are different from "Attacks" or "Sabotage", which are listed separately. At other times, phrases such as "acts of terrorism" are used to denote almost any Viet Cong activity. According to the writer of this booklet, "By 1958 the use of terror by the Viet Cong increased appreciably. It was used both to win prestige and to back up demands for support from the people. . . ."

This alleged increase in terrorism is used to explain why the Viet Cong can move freely among the peasants, is well supplied with intelligence reports, and can obtain food, shelter, and recruits.

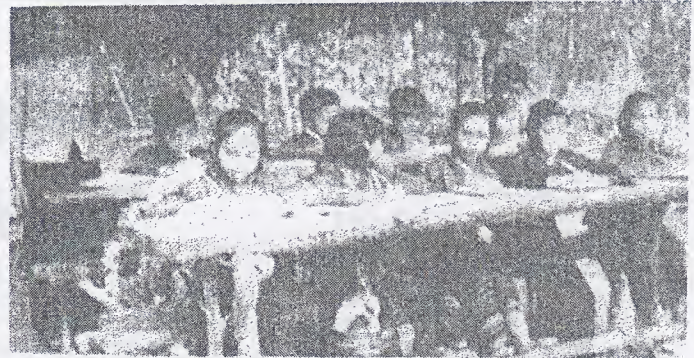
It is flatly in contradiction with all first-hand accounts of the relationships between the Viet Cong and the people. It is flatly in contradiction with the expressed policy of the N.L.F. It is flatly in contradiction with the Maoist theory of revolutionary warfare. We conclude that as a general statement of the situation it is simply not true.

As one authority on revolutionary warfare has written:

"The government is systematically eliminated from the countryside by the conversion or killing of village officials, who are then replaced by the political arm of the movement. The rebels must then build an administrative structure to collect taxes and provide some education and social welfare. . . . The official American view that the guerrillas' tasks are easier because they only destroy contradicts the findings of those who have studied and observed these movements."

This whole article disposes of many of the official fallacies about the nature of guerrilla warfare.

A vivid case history of the way in which the Diem government lost control of the villages is given by Denis Warner in Chapter 8 of "The Last Confucian". The account is based largely on documents found on Viet Cong cadres captured while operating



In small schools, children like these m'Nog kids learn their ABC's; written scripts for the tribal peoples have been invented by the NFL.

in the area. This account warrants some detailed treatment, for it counters the arguments that the Viet Cong rule only by terror. The explanation given by Warner is much more credible:

"To begin with, XB was not a Communist village, or even a village that sympathized with the Communists. On the contrary . . . it seems that the Diem administration had done good work there, bringing governmental authority in the form of an administrative office, a security section, and a post of militia-men."

Note that the "good work" was predominantly military and administrative—hardly likely by itself to win much support.

In contrast, the Viet Cong cadres stressed the immediate problems of the peasants—their desire for land, lower taxes, schools, and self-government. "The party also began to attend to public health, sanitation, education and even the marketing of farmers' produce. It opened a first-aid station which was run by a public health cadre, who also visited the sick, and trained and appointed a midwife."

It is small wonder that by the end of 1960 the Viet Cong had won such a measure of support that the village held a festival to celebrate its joining of the National Liberation Front.

So successful, indeed, were the Viet Cong in producing an alternative administration to that of Saigon that a French correspondent of "Le Monde" wrote in 1965:

"The people have this picture to look at. On one side there is real government, law and order, and responsible people. On the other side, chaos, anarchy and disorder. The people chose those who had won the contest."

**The real government, with law, and order, and responsible people, was the Viet Cong.**

Once a state of civil war existed, those who occupied administrative or authoritative positions in the government must surely have known that they were

marked men. Indeed, often the village headman had a semi-military position, and was protected by a squad of soldiers. The killing of soldiers is not called "terrorism" when our side does it.

Similarly, the kidnappings which figure prominently in the U.S. statistics of terrorism were not usually done for any purpose except the indoctrination of the prisoner in the aims and philosophy of the N.L.F.—it is really ludicrous that the White Paper includes "Forced Propaganda Sessions" among its statistics of terrorism! Many of the men kidnapped were later returned unharmed, and would, naturally, claim that they have been forcibly abducted.

## Programme

The N.L.F. Manifesto proclaimed in 1960, has the following objectives:

(a) To rid the country of the U.S.-controlled military dictatorship and the U.S. military presence.

(b) To "institute a largely liberal and democratic government incorporating the essential democratic freedoms of press, of opinion, of association, of movement, of trade unionism" and of religious worship.

(c) To release all political prisoners, to wipe out illiteracy and to pursue a policy of peace and neutrality.

(d) "To reduce land rent; implement agrarian reform with the aim of providing land to the tillers," guaranteeing the property rights to farmers.

(e) To resume normal relations between the zones of North and South and, through a process of negotiation, bring about their reunification by peaceful stages.

Although this programme contains striking differences from the 1960 constitution of the D.R.V.N., it is not dissimilar to the D.R.V.N.'s 1948 constitution. The most important difference is the N.L.F. preference for peasant proprietorship of land; the Northern system requires state ownership of land.

Cont. page 4.



**HITLER, September 1, 1939:**

"I love peace . . . I can no longer find any willingness of the Polish government to conduct serious negotiations."

**Lyndon Johnson, September 21, 1966:**

"We love peace . . . unless the aggressor is willing to give up his aggression and sit down and talk we have no choice."

We do not call for negotiations. What we call for is withdrawal.

For some few years the NLF and North Vietnam thought the war would be ended by negotiations, and had put out "peace feelers" several times in 1963 and 1964, but these were ignored by the Americans. In fact, every time there were peace moves the Americans increased their war effort.

The NLF has clearly stated its conditions for peace. Prior to 1962 the Front wanted settlement on a return to the Geneva Agreements. But in 1962, it made a not insignificant concession, and suggested that South Vietnam could be neutralised under international guarantees, with a composite government representing all political groups. The question of re-unification with North Vietnam could be studied later.

# Negotiation is NO answer

The U.S. response to this was that one cannot negotiate with "criminals".

And this is Johnson's attitude to the body that has an overwhelming weight of evidence to show that it represents the wishes of the majority of the people of South Vietnam.

Most observers on Vietnam urge that settlement should be based on the principles of the Geneva Agreements. Because they have been so often misrepresented, here they are:

1. Cessation of hostilities and disengagement of military forces.
2. Vietnam is one country, and political arrangements must be made for its re-unification.
3. Pending the re-unification, the respective military zones shall not build up their armaments nor form military alliances.

The one thing that stops settlement on these principles is the size of the U.S. military machine in Vietnam.

Calls for negotiations are meaningless as long as the foreign troops are there and as long as Johnson intends them to remain there. When he decides to withdraw them, then talk of negotiation becomes meaningful, and only then.

In the meantime what Bertrand Russell says is of singular relevance . . .

**Bertrand Russell**

Many in the peace movement think the Vietnamese unwise or unreasonably stubborn for refusing to negotiate with the United States. The prolongation of the war is made the responsibility of the Vietnamese on the ground that American forces can not be defeated and, therefore, only negotiations provide a solution. It is usually added that the "real interests" of the Vietnamese lie in accepting U.S. demands for talks.

Superficially, this argument may seem compelling to a peace movement for whom words such as "cease-fire", "compromise", "negotiations" and "peaceful settlement" have a familiar ring. When examined however, the argument disintegrates.

To demand of the Vietnamese that they negotiate with the United States is to treat equally the victim and the attacker. This can be clearly seen if we ask ourselves whether such a demand to the Poles or Norwegians would have seemed just after the Nazi attack on their countries.

Quite apart from this basic issue: the right to self-determination, there is the history of the particular struggle in Vietnam. Negotiations already took place—in 1954. The Vietnamese had defeated French colonialism after nine years of bitter struggle during which 80 per cent of the French colonial war was financed by the United States. Because of their belief that the Geneva Agreements

provided for fair elections, non-intervention on the part of foreign powers and eventual unification through mutual consent, the Vietnamese agreed to divide Vietnam into North and South.

Shortly afterwards, Eisenhower stated that anyone who knew anything about Vietnamese affairs knew that Ho Chi Minh would receive at least four out of five votes in a fair election. The elections were obstructed and the United States set up a regime in the South under the control of American officers posing as advisors. They selected former police spies of the French occupation army who were hated and despised by the population. Ngo Dinh Diem, a wealthy Catholic landowner from the North, was installed in power. The elections agreed upon in the negotiated settlements of 1954 at Geneva were never held. U.S. officers and troops began to pour into South Vietnam in what came to be known as America's "secret war". Hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were killed. Over eight million people were placed in forced-labour camps characterized by barbed-wire, torture and starvation.

It should be abundantly clear that the very presence of the "United States" troops in Vietnam is the grossest violation of painfully negotiated agreements. To ask the Vietnamese now after twelve years of torment to negotiate about the violation continues is to insult them. . . .

Words can be misleading. The peace movement through the advocacy of negotiations in Vietnam has harmed the cause it purports to promote. We must side with the Vietnamese who defend every value which the peace movement has espoused abstractly. The end of the war in Vietnam will depend on our capacity to speak and act clearly, alerting people to its origins and motive force. When people in Britain and America oppose Johnson effectively, then and only then will the war end.

It is clear that the call for negotiations has been launched in response to Uncle Sam's needs. He cannot win victory in the south so he expands the war to the north. He cannot con the north into surrender so he resorts to trickery seeking to perpetuate his domination of the south by claiming that the war is unwinnable and both sides must make concessions—he will concede a pause in bombing and the Vietnamese will concede their sovereignty, independence and freedom.

## The N.L.F. cont. from page 3.

The other important difference is the accent on democratic freedoms. However, some assert that the broadly representative nature of the N.L.F. is only transitory, that in accordance with the classic pattern of Maoist revolutionary warfare there must first be a broadly based "middle-class democratic revolution". The successful completion of this revolution will be followed by a "Communist takeover" of the leadership, with the associated losses of civil rights and political freedoms.

On the other hand, it has been argued, by Walter Lippman and others, that the Communists dominated most of the resistance movements in Europe during World War II and that whilst, for example, in Yugoslavia this domination resulted in a Communist government, in France it did not.

An interview with an N.L.F. spokesman in 1963 gives a picture of its position:

"There is no question of installing a people's democracy in the South, at least as you understand the term. There will be no nationalisation for the present. We shall be able to consider coolly the case of important foreign enterprises, especially French enterprises, which play such a large part in the South Vietnamese economy . . .

"In the political field we ask only for the end of dictatorship, free and fair elections in which the country's political organisations and social categories will take part, the progressive withdrawal of U.S. troops, and co-operating on equal terms with all countries wishing to help us. Our foreign policy will be based on neutrality and refusal to join military blocs . . .

"In the long run we prefer to settle our affairs between ourselves—that is, between Southerners. Certainly, aid from the North would be useful, but it is not our first preoccupation and will not be the decisive element in the struggle. Besides, the distance and the lack of logistic infrastructure mean that it will never be important. We have not struggled for years, in the worst conditions, to replace one dictatorship with another. We cannot accept dependence on the North. Certainly we hope that the country will be reunited one day. But that will be possible only in the distant future, for, to start with, the two regimes will be different."

From "Vietnam And Australia".  
Published by the University Study Group on Vietnam. University Study Group.

American sources give 480,000 tons of bombs and bullets expended in 1965 and 637,000 tons of bombs plus 500,000 tons of bullets in 1966. (U.S. News and World Report, Jan. 2, 1967) This is more than twice the total used in the entire three years of the Korean War, given as 448,000 tons. (Herald Tribune, 10/10/66)



This war will end in victory. The idea that war is "unwinnable"—meaning unwinnable for both sides—is a euphemistic way of saying it is unwinnable for the U.S.—or that the U.S. is, in fact, in the process of losing. As President Nguyen Huu Tho of the NLF says—"Final victory" is not conceived as wiping out all Americans on South Vietnamese soil, still less, imposing a total military defeat on the U.S. It means that the NLF leadership is confident that it can smash every offensive the U.S. and its satellite forces mount, that it can defeat every military and political manoeuvre, that it can impose heavy

losses on enemy troops on a sharply rising scale, that it can continue to defend and enlarge the territory and population under its control; that in the end the U.S. will see that there is no alternative but to pack up and go home. And isn't this essentially what is now being reported—that the "turning point" of a few months ago was never there?

In this conglomeration of mythical, much-talked-of turning points and in the vacuum of government talk on military realities, the truth about negotiations should be exposed by open and widespread support for the Vietnamese people and their National Front for Liberation.

## U.S. Soldiers in Vietnam Cheer Sen. Fulbright for his opposition War Activities.

Dear Senator Fulbright, Don't let Gen. Westmoreland and President Johnson erode your will to dissent with the argument that all the soldiers "over there" staunchly support the war. They don't. Most of them are apathetic and I am by no means the only one who is vehemently opposed to it.

Gen. Ky's government has virtually no popular support: most of his top aides sport French decorations on their uniforms. The Vietnamese people identify us with the hated French imperialists because we support the Ky regime. By occupying and devastating Vietnam we have gained few friends.

The President must know the VC are a largely indigenous group who have had legitimate gripes against the many "miracle-working" governments of South Vietnam and that in our bombings of North Vietnam we have committed outrages for which we once condemned the Nazis. With admiration.

### Americans – the terrorists

Dear Senator Fulbright: I went to Vietnam a hard-charging Marine 2d Lt., sure I had an-

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Production Co-ordination: Research Publications Pty. Ltd. 428 Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills, Victoria. Web Offset Printer: J. E. Bennett, 596 Main Road, Belgrave, who do not identify themselves with the objectives of the National Liberation Front.



Abridged from Letters put into the Congression Record of 16/6/1967.

sawered the plea of a victimized people. That belief lasted about two weeks. Instead of fighting Communist aggressors I found that 90% of the time our military actions were directed against the people of South Vietnam. We are engaged in a war in Vietnam to pound a people into submission to a government that has little or no popular support.

Much has been written about the terror tactics used by the Viet Cong. The real terrorists in Vietnam are the Americans and their allies. I don't deny that some of the accusations against the VC are true but from my own experience the terror and havoc that we spread makes the VC look like a Girl Scout picnic.

Can you image what an isolated village looks like after it has been hit by over 500 750-pound bombs in a matter of seconds? Women, children, old men, cattle and every living thing is struck down without ever knowing from where their destruction originated. This particular village ceased to exist because it was in a VC dominated area. Intelligence reports said it might have been used as a North Vietnamese regiment headquarters. We never found any dead soldiers but as

## Seen in "Lancet"

### MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR VIETNAM

The Medical Air Committee for Vietnam was set up in 1965, under the presidency of Lord Boyd Orr, to send medical supplies in response to requests made by the National Liberation Front, Red Cross in South Vietnam and the Red Cross Society of North Vietnam. Supplies already sent have ranged from drugs, surgical instruments, and dried milk to large items, such as a respirator and an ambulance. Blood is collected at donor sessions organised by the committee and plasma is also dispatched. The Minister of Health has told the committee that hospital-supplies officers may wish from time to time to dispose of surplus equipment, and the committee would welcome descriptions of surplus stock and also offers of help from doctors. Communications should be sent to Dr. Joan K. McMichael, hon. secretary of the committee, 29 Great James Street, London W.C.1.

it is the custom in VC controlled areas all the dead were listed as VC killed in action.

I wanted to tell you that there are many, many of us in the military who oppose this war and appreciate your efforts to bring out the truth and get this thing stopped. We are not very vocal because it is all right for a military man to speak out in support of the war but to speak out in opposition would subject us to very serious repercussions. All three of my friends who went to Vietnam with me came away sharing my feelings.

At one time I thought I would make the military my career. But I could not live with myself if I stayed in the service of my own free will and was sent to Vietnam again to brutalize these poor people.

### The people – the real casualties

Dear Senator Fulbright: I have been meaning to write this letter to you for a long while. This evening the pressures are too great to be ignored. Last evening I listened to a VOA (Voice of America) broadcast on "Vietnam War Dissent in the U.S." The essential theme was that those who protest the war were either Communists or cranks. And coupled with this was a sly reminder that we have our share of lunatics who wish a wider war, and that they also dissent from present policy. Not one word about responsible, reasoned objections—we couldn't admit that.

Following the VOA broadcast I turned to Radio Peking. The usual inanities about the "glorious thought of Chairman Mao" sounded somehow different—because I realized how close the two distortions were, in their joint disregard of truth while pursuing doctrine. I am horrified that my government is unable to admit any possibility of "error".

But this is really a small point. This evening it is fairly quiet but

Monday, while at the province chief's house the large party enjoyed good food and loud music, in the next valley over the ridge the 500-pounders fell steadily. The villagers get a different sort of music—B.52 style. I wondered then if we can ever put these people back together as fast as we are blowing them apart.

In the past few months as an advisor to the VN Coastal Force, I have seen too often the real casualties of this conflict—the farmers and their families in the Delta mangled by air strikes, and the villagers here killed and burned out by our friendly Korean mercenaries. Of course, I do my share in the lunatic ward. I have even been reprimanded for over-enthusiastic pursuit of VC. Part of it is just compensation—it is refreshing, after seeing so many innocent people suffer, to meet real, live hostile forces capable of striking back.

This evening they showed the FK documentary film here in the MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam) compound. I could not help but feel a great sense of loss as I listened to the richly rolling phrases—whatever has become of our dream? Where is that America that opposed tyrannies at every turn, without enquiring first whether some particular form of tyranny might be of use to us?

I wish I had more answers. But the obligation to oppose evil is pretty absolute—it doesn't necessarily depend on having an exact blueprint for entering the Promised Land. As you are probably aware, I am possibly violating 17,000 directives in writing you. But it is not possible to keep silent, as you so amply demonstrate. You remind me of Kent, in "Lear", who in the face of dire threats from his King replied, "Whilst my tongue can give vent to clamour, I'll tell thee thou dost evil." I pray that you fare better than Kent. And as a certain comedian less than half-jokingly pleads: "I want my country back." Good night, sir.



We have included below extracts from speeches given in 1965 by Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation.

You are entitled, of course, as are we, to treat some of what is quoted with due scepticism. Some of the phraseology is rather hard to adapt to, as is at times the over-riding sentiments. But so also are those of Churchill's World War Two speeches, if read now. Nevertheless we think it is important to hear what "the other side" has to say.

Nguyen Huu Tho did not himself participate in the anti-French war. He was a lawyer in Saigon, son of a civil servant in the French Colonial administration and was far from being branded a leftist. However he made the "mistake" of leading a group of Saigon intellectuals in their protest against the arrival of three American warships in Saigon in 1950. The ships arrival was meant as an expression of solidarity with the French in their war effort. They did not stay long but Tho was imprisoned for his protestations for some two years until Viet Minh forces freed him. When the Geneva Agreements were signed he resumed his law practice in Saigon.



Lawyer NGUYEN HUUTHO, Chairman of the Provisional Central Committee of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation reading the NLF Manifesto at the Congress of the founding of the NLF

## RIFLE FIRE

But just 12 days after the ceasefire agreements were signed in July 1954 there were massive celebrations in Saigon. Coupled with the celebrations were resolutions passed at the celebration demonstrations asking for immediate release of political and military prisoners, as provided for in the agreements. As Tho says, "The reply (from the authorities) came in a volley of rifle fire. Several people were wounded and a pregnant woman was shot through the stomach. That this, the first demonstration in peace and freedom, as we thought, should be brutally suppressed, acted as a cold douche on the most ardent spirits. The same day we set up a Committee of Defense of Peace and the Geneva Agreements, and I was elected president. The Committee aimed at acting as a sort of watchdog to see the Agreements were strictly applied and to bring to the notice of the International Control Commission (comprised of India as chairman, Poland and Canada) any violations of the Agreements. Within a couple of months we started getting delegations from the provinces begging us to set up similar committees all over the countryside. We started organising them when, on August the 11th, 1954, four months after the signing of the Geneva Agreements, the police suddenly swooped down, dissolved our committees and arrested a number of leading members, including myself. We had no idea at that time, but in forming the various branches we had created the embryo of the National Front for Liberation set up more than six years later."

So the repression, the terror campaigns, and the reactionary policies began to be felt all over the countryside. Resistance to Diem's repression became overt after 1957. The sporadic resistance finally came under central leadership with the formation of the NLF in December, 1960.

On the occasion of the 5th founding anniversary of the NLF Nguyen Huu Tho explains the *raison d'être* of the NLF, its history (in brief) and something of its nature, and its military successes.

## GREETINGS

"Celebrating the 5th founding anniversary of the NLF, the entire South Vietnamese people and the National Front for Liberation wish to convey heartfelt and warm greetings to their brothers and friends in all continents. We sincerely thank the socialist countries, the peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the progressive people in the United States and other countries, for their sympathy and great international support and assistance accorded to our self-liberation struggle.

"Following the victorious August Revolution in 1945 and the success of the 9-year War of Resistance against the French colonialists and the American interventionists, the people in the South should have enjoyed together with their compatriots throughout the country a life in peace and achieve their basic

national rights, namely Independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"But the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have scrapped the Geneva Agreements, carried out downright suppression and drowned in blood and fire all the patriotic forces of the South Vietnamese people fighting for independence, democracy and peaceful reunification of the Fatherland.

"Left with no other alternative, the South Vietnamese people had to rise up to struggle for their own right to live, their own happiness and freedom. During the years of hard and fierce political struggle against the enemy, our compatriots with their bare hands opposed the extremely barbarous violence of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen and realised more and more deeply that to defeat the enemy and win back independence and freedom the only way is to wage a revolutionary struggle, using the violence of the people to oppose the counter-revolutionary violence of the enemy.

"That is why in the last months of 1959 when the policy of repression and terrorism of the U.S. imperialists and their flunkies became extremely predatory... our people's hatred mounted to an unprecedented level. Millions of our compatriots rose up to wage political struggle along with armed struggle. The enemy control was broken by big chunks, the puppet administration machine at village and hamlet level crumbled in many localities, and many vast areas were liberated.

"In order to meet the pressing people's self-liberation struggle, requirements of the entire the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation came into being on December 20, 1960, with the aim of uniting the people of all strata, nationalities, religious communities and political parties and all patriotic personalities in the struggle to drive out the U.S. aggressors from the country and overthrow the puppet administration — their lackeys — wrest back their sacred national rights, achieve independence, democracy, peace and neutrality in South Vietnam with a view to reuniting the Fatherland.

"Since then, the Front has become a focal point to unite all patriotic forces in South Vietnam, the organizer and leader of all successors of our Southern compatriots in their fights against U.S. imperialism for national salvation. Since then, too, the victory of our people has become bigger and bigger with every passing year and the defeat of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, heavier and heavier.

"Looking back at the path travelled by us in the past five years, the five years of unity and persistent and dauntless struggle crowned with glorious victories, our entire people and armed forces feel boundless pride over these victories recorded in our anti-U.S. cause for national salvation.

## SUCCESSES

The great successes we have won are:

1. The front of great unity against U.S. aggression and for national salvation of the entire South Vietnamese people is now steadier and broader than ever. The front has rallied under its banner of patriotism and justice more than ten million people of all walks of life, of all ages, circles, nationalities, religious communities, workers, peasants, labouring urban people, retail-dealers, handicraftsmen, youth, pupils, students, intellectuals, women, old people, industrialists and tradesmen, patriotic personalities, minority nationals in the Western Plateaux, Khmer nationals, Catholics, Protestants, Cao Dai and Hoa Hao believers. Hundreds of thousands of overseas Vietnamese, though living far from the Fatherland, have been turning their thought toward the Front, to its banner of justice and national salvation.

Cont. page 7



Cont. from page 6

Chinese residents in South Vietnam have also joined the anti-U.S. struggle. The Front has moreover co-ordinated its activities with organisations and individuals of different political tendencies. It has now become master of the situation, the sole genuine representative of the South Vietnam people and has gained an ever greater prestige and influence in the world. The strength of the South Vietnam people's fighting in solidarity within the Front in an invincible strength in their fight for self liberation.

2. The large liberated area under the control of the Front stretching from the Ben Hai river bank to the vast Western Plateaux and the rich delta region of Nam Bo (South Vietnam proper) is covering more than four-fifths of South Vietnam's territory.

The ten million people in the areas are boosting production, improving living conditions, building fighting villages of hamlets, developing the guerilla warfare, developing culture, education, public health, and making active contribution in manpower and material resources to the national salvation resistance war. There remain vast political, material and moral potentials of the South Vietnam revolution in the liberated zone. That is the rich and steady rear of the anti-U.S. struggle for national salvation.

3. The liberation armed forces of the South Vietnam people are stronger than any time in the past. They are endowed with a very high determination to fight and to win, have made quick progress in politics, tactics, technique, organisation and command.

4. Our brothers and friends all over the world now are more numerous than ever before. They

are supporting the South Vietnam people more powerfully than ever, both morally and materially, including the offer to send volunteers when necessary. Many countries and important international organisations have recognised the Front as the sole and genuine representative of the South Vietnam people . . . the Front's voice . . . has been heard at nearly all the rostrums of important international conferences, from Hanoi to Phnom Penh, Jakarta, Cairo, Accra, Helsinki, etc.

"At present, the U.S. imperialists are on the one hand, prattling about 'peace' and 'negotiations', and on the other, taking their aggressive war in South Vietnam to an unprecedented degree by massively introducing additional U.S. troops and huge quantities of modern weapons and other war means into this area. The huge war machine of the U.S. is being mobilised to a high degree with the aim of carrying

out this policy of war intensification and expansion. The U.S. imperialists are also escalating their air war of destruction against the Northern part of our country attempting thereby to threaten our people in both zones. They have not only intensified and expanded their war in our country but also fanned up the flame of war in Laos, repeatedly sabotaged the Kingdom of Cambodia, thus threatening the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of our two neighbouring and friendly countries.

"The above said schemes and acts have clearly proved that the U.S. imperialists have not yet renounced their bellicose and aggressive policy and are deliberately sticking to South Vietnam in an attempt to turn half our country into a new-type colony and military base of the United States and force the yoke of neo-colonialism on our people."

## Aid to the N.L.F.—why history, etc. cont. from pages 1 & 2.

the Australian Government has forced them to go there and fight an aggressive war—not because of our aid to the NLF. The slaughter on both sides will end only when the war ends and our troops are brought home.

We opposed the launching of this dirty war right from the start and our only desire is to see it brought to an end but it is now clear that this can only be achieved by the total withdrawal of all Western troops

It is the Government who are traitors for sacrificing Australian lives in defence of American interests.

2. Some people say that they agree completely with our views but that by raising them in public at this time we can only harm the broader anti-war movement, embarrass the ALP and provide ammunition for the DLP.

We disagreed with this because we believe that it is extremely important to revitalize the anti-war movement on a new basis. The movement was gradually becoming assimilated by its environment. Instead of actively opposing American aggression and being a source of concern to the government by frustrating its war

plans the peace movement was being taken in by such slogans as "Stop the War, Negotiate" which reflect President Johnson's position and engaging entirely in such activities as peaceful poster parades which cause the Government no inconvenience. The movement was beginning to fold in on itself with a whole community of 'vietniks' and 'peaceniks' solemnly telling each other about the virtues of a peaceful solution to the war. We felt that it was vital to make people turn away from holding demonstrations to convince each other about how bad the war is and towards effective action to end it.

We think the movement should reject phoney 'peaceful solutions' and lay the blame for the war squarely where it belongs — on the Americans and look for a solution where it can be found — complete withdrawal of the Americans and their allies. Our stand has certainly achieved its main purpose — to re-awaken public interest in Vietnam and it has also succeeded in bringing home certain points which could not be made in any other way. People are having to find out who the enemy is and what the NLF-Viet Cong business is all about. They are learning that our enemy is not the 'Viet Cong' — an anonymous group of terrorists probably originating from north Vietnam or China but the National Liberation Front — the effective government in most of southern Vietnam with diplomatic representatives overseas.

The mere fact that any group of Australian citizens would actually aid the enemy is causing doubts about the war in the minds of many people — it has never happened before and people are wondering why it is happening now. It is really rather strange that people who oppose the NLF and support the war

came out in support of our 'democratic right' to aid the 'enemy'! It all helps to weaken the Government's position. We have certainly not harmed the broader movement by our stand. On the contrary, positions that were previously regarded as extreme have now become moderate and respectable as a result of our action. This was particularly noticeable at Monash where the Labor Club had previously been unable to get the SRC to declare itself against the war but a meeting of 800 students called specifically to condemn us carried a resolution opposing the war and calling on the Australian Government to recognize the NLF as a party principal to negotiations. In this connection we should perhaps mention that our stand in favour of non-medical aid has made medical aid seem respectable by comparison when previously medical aid would have been regarded as equally treasonable. If we have embarrassed the Labor Party it is because we have forced that party to once again take a definite stand on the war and on civil liberties. It has certainly been made quite clear that we are in no way connected with the party and we have done nothing to indicate that there might be any such connection. In the long run, the present controversy can only do the ALP, the Labor Movement, and the peace movement, good. It has not done any noticeable damage so far.

Get your organization to carry resolutions of support or, if you prefer, of support for medical aid only or support for our democratic rights only. Arrange for distribution of this pamphlet and other available material.

Whether you agree with us or not, make full use of the opportunities for political discussion

provided by the controversy over whether we have the right to send aid.

### Editor's note:—

In anticipating criticism to the effect that this publication is 'very one-sided', we admit quite openly that it is. In the Australian political context it is also 'extremist'.

The war is seen (and we believe correctly) in this publication as a matter of right and wrong with the NLF being in the right, and guess who's wrong? For this analysis we make no apology. Like Mr Amoni (see page 8) we have lost patience with the cold excursions into academia; for much the same reasons. What we are saying is that it is now more than clear that we in Australia have a government that has detailed its troops to fight on the wrong side in South Vietnam. It's a painful thing to admit but its about time we did. The least we can do in the meantime is work for the withdrawal of these troops and introduce the previously anonymous "other side".



## Attitudes to Government Action

The Government says that we are traitors, that they are aiding the enemies of our country and that it is necessary to bring down special legislation to stop us.

We say that the Government are traitors, that they are selling young Australian lives for American dollars and that it is necessary to oppose their legislation if we do not want to become accomplices of the sell-out.

If Australia was at war, there would be no problem—our actions would legally be treasonable and we could simply be locked up without anyone worrying very much. But Australia does not declare war against North Vietnam or the NLF because America has not done so. Australia could not declare war because this would provide American critics of the Administration in Congress with further ammunition to embarrass Johnson. If the United States and its "allies" were to make a formal declaration of war they would be even more clearly exposed as aggressors in the eyes of the world.

Even without a declaration of war the Government could take action by simply proclaiming the National Liberation Front or North Vietnam to be an enemy. This would invoke sections of the Crimes Act that have penalties of death or life imprisonment for "treason" and "treachery". But they do not dare invoke the Crimes Act. First because it would be difficult for Holt to explain to the people why the NLF is an enemy and yet we are not at war. Second, and most important, Holt knows that there is widespread opposition to the Crimes Act with its far-reaching prohibitions and heavy penalties. He knows that he just hasn't the kind of public support that would enable him to use this sledgehammer law so he has gone to all the trouble of drafting a new law specially to get us. This is a most unusual step, contrary to all traditions of justice, that a government should introduce a new law specifically aimed at a particular group who were previously engaged in a perfectly legal activity. It means that the Government is getting rather panicky and looking for a way out.

Holt knows that the Government's position is becoming increasingly shaky, that as the war goes on, casualties will mount

and he will have to call up more and more conscripts. He knows that the war is getting more expensive and will lead to higher taxes and wage restrictions which will in turn cause industrial unrest and strike action. He wants to divert the rising tide of anti-government feeling by using us as a scape-goat. If he gets away with legislation against supporters of the NLF he will then be ready to invoke the Crimes Act and clamp down on all anti-war activity and trade union struggles. Holt was a member of the Liberal Government which drafted the Crimes Act and he could try to use this opportunity provided by the student actions as a preliminary step towards invoking it. He should be stopped now.

We are not claiming that there is any new "academic right" for students in particular to aid the enemies fighting Australia. But we do believe that the Vietnamese people are not Australia's enemies and that all Australians have a right to support them and should not confine their struggle against the war to the limits set by Holt's parliament and Holt's laws. The Australian Government is guilty of treachery because it is sacrificing Australian lives in defence of American interests. It is important to oppose that treachery by all means available.

We are in a most unusual situation—this is the first time in our history that we have had troops fighting overseas while any section at home actually and openly supports the other side.

## manipulation?

The Government is trying to cover up this embarrassing position by saying that we are traitors, or that we are just irresponsible students, or that we are being manipulated by sinister political operators but the fact remains, and it is an important fact, a group of Australian citizens conscientiously support the "enemy". It has never happened before and we hope it will never have to happen again. It is happening because the Government is following a treacherous policy of selling out to American interests and is engaged in an illegal, undeclared war in defiance of world opinion and international treaties.

Perhaps there is no legal right to support the enemy but there is certainly a moral right and we would say a very important duty to do so. After the Second World War, the Nuremberg trials established that there were such international crimes as crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity and that there is individual responsibility for these crimes. Our Government is, in association with its "great and powerful ally" committing crimes against peace by launching an aggressive war contrary to the U.N. Charter and the Geneva

Accords. It is committing war crimes in South Vietnam by massacring the civilian population and causing indiscriminate destruction and it is committing crimes against humanity by using gas, torture and genocide. Individual Australians who acquiesce in the Government's policies cannot escape responsibility for these crimes. We do not intend to merely express our opposition by pious protests and peaceful demonstrations. We intend to aid the Vietnamese people against whom these crimes are directed and we are confident that with or without our support the liberation forces will eventually be victorious.

Whether you agree with our stand or not, the present controversy raises important issues of civil rights. The Government's

action indicates that democracy in Australia is supposed to mean that you can believe what you like providing you don't try to act on your beliefs.

If they get away with this particular act of repression they could well extend its scope, via the Crimes Act, to cover all opponents of the Government. The trade union movement has a long history of struggle for democratic rights and it was particularly active in opposing the Crimes Act. Accordingly, we are asking all trade unionists, all opponents of the war and all other sections who support democratic rights to oppose the new Government attack whether or not they support the N.L.F.

## Minority of One?

**SPEECH AT THE 1964 BERKELEY TEACH-IN by M. S. Aronson, survivor of Nazi concentration camps and publisher of "The Minority of One", an "Independent Monthly for an American Alternative" — dedicated to the eradication of all restrictions on thought". For Aronson's complete address see "The Minority of One", July, 1965; for a discussion of his Berkeley proposal see the same publication for September, 1965.**

their graves or from the fields and rivers upon which their ashes were thrown, they would implore this generation of Americans not to be silent in the face of the genocidal atrocities committed on the people of Vietnam.

This is no time to be silent! When a war is waged by American and American-led troops against a people whose vast majority, as all accounts agree, would not have American troops on their soil, this is no time to be silent! When eight million out of a total South Vietnamese population of 14 million languish in concentration camps euphemized as "strategic hamlets" this is no time to be silent! When napalm bombs are thrown on villages on the assumption that their entire population is the enemy, this is no time to be silent! When ever man and women tilling their own soil are taken by overflying American pilots as enemies and therefore as targets for their bullets, this is no time to be silent!

An American genocide is not preferable to a German genocide; and the indifference of millions of Americans is as criminal and inhuman as was the indifference of millions of German onlookers.

In the present life-and-death struggle of the Vietnamese people there must be among America's youth some who are sufficiently sensitive to justice, sufficiently outraged by the conscienceless actions of their government, and sufficiently courageous — to join the people of Vietnam in their heroic self-defence.

They, these volunteers, will be the heroes of a future American civilization. They will make a unique contribution toward the emergence of such an America as will survive the present empire-building stage and be accepted into the family of man not in fear and terror but in earned respect and honour. Thank you.

"I am appalled by the dry, detached, impersonal, unemotional type of debate that goes on among some professorial eunuchs, which is hailed as the passport to academia, and which is supposed to be displayed with equal sterility whether things concern the wiping out of nations or the desirability of fluoride in our water. Not only Eichmann's cold efficiency is inhuman and diabolic but also, and even more so, his moral neutrality. To insist on decorum and politeness in the slaughterhouse of nations is the very peak of human self-deception and of a hellish type of snobbery.

It is thus that I speak to you here not only as one who tries to observe and analyse international relations but also as one who survived six years of internment in Nazi concentration camps; as one who has lost in them all of his next of kin, all those he grew up with; as one who, confronting the fire-spewing chimneys of the Auschwitz crematoria, could not comprehend how so much of the world stood passively and silently by, witnessing Hitler's genocide.

As a survivor of that Gehenna, I believe to be morally justified when evoking here the memory of the millions who did not survive, if they could call out to you from